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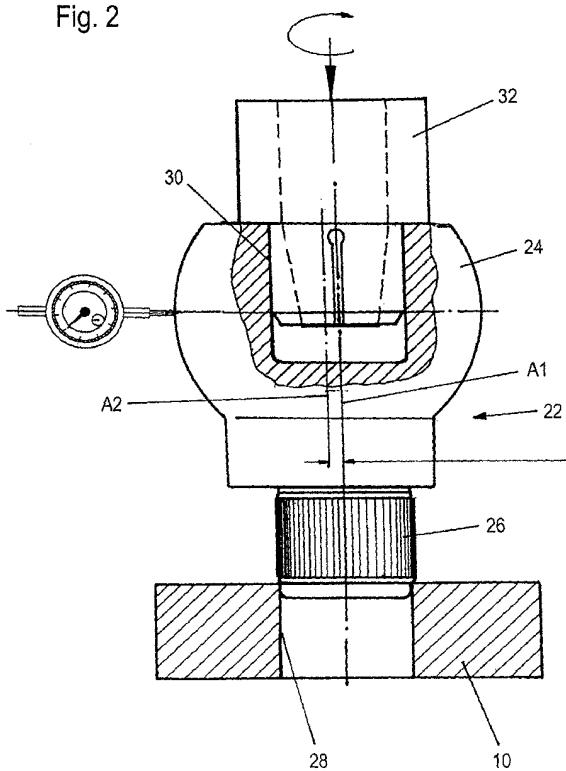
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(54) Drive linkage for an automotive windshield wiper system

(57) A drive linkage for an automotive windshield wiper system comprises a crank (10), a link member (14) and at least one ball joint connecting the link member (14) with the crank (10). A ball stud (22) is provided with a ball portion (24) and a shaft portion (26) that has an axis (A1) shifted with respect to an axis (A2) passing through the center of the ball portion (24). A cylindrical mounting hole (28) is provided in the crank (10). For ad-

justment and assembly, an end of the shaft portion (26) is presented co-axially in front of the mounting hole (28). The ball stud (22) is rotated about the axis (A1) of the shaft portion (26) to a predetermined position with respect to the crank (10). The shaft portion (26) of the ball stud (22) is then press-fitted in the mounting hole (28) while the ball stud (22) is maintained in the predetermined position about the axis of the mounting hole (28).

Fig. 2



Description

[0001] The present invention relates to a drive linkage for an automotive windshield wiper system and to a method of pre-assembling such a drive linkage.

[0002] A drive linkage for an automotive windshield wiper system usually comprises a crank mounted on and driven by an output shaft of an electric motor, one link member for each wiper and a ball joint for each link member to pivotally connect the link member with the crank. A ball joint typically has a ball stud with a ball portion and a co-axial shaft portion. The shaft portion has a threaded end and is assembled with the crank by insertion in a through hole of the crank and engaging a screw nut on the threaded end of the shaft portion.

[0003] The wiping area on the windshield is determined by the pivotal movement of the wipers which, in turn, depends on the complex movement of the link members. The predominant factor that determines movement of the link members is the radius on which a link member is connected to the crank with respect to the axis of the output shaft of the electric motor.

[0004] To compensate for tolerances in manufacture, it would therefore be advantageous to permit adjustment of such radius upon assembly of the linkage. One way to adjust the radius is to provide each ball joint with a ball stud that has a ball portion eccentric with respect to the shaft portion and to mount the ball stud on the crank in the appropriate angular position with respect to the axis of the ball stud.

[0005] The present invention provides a drive linkage for an automotive windshield wiper system, and a method of pre-assembling such drive linkage, that permit an easy and economic compensation for manufacturing tolerances of its components.

[0006] Specifically, the invention provides a method of pre-assembling a drive linkage for an automotive windshield wiper system, the linkage comprising a crank, a link member and at least one ball joint connecting the link member with the crank. A ball stud is provided with a ball portion and a shaft portion that has an axis shifted with respect to an axis passing through the centre of the ball portion. A cylindrical mounting hole is provided in the crank. An end of the shaft portion is presented co-axially in front of the mounting hole. The ball stud is rotated about the axis of the shaft portion to a predetermined position with respect to the crank. The shaft portion of the ball stud is then press-fitted in the mounting hole while the ball stud is maintained in the predetermined position about the axis of the mounting hole. Thus, by rotating the ball stud about its axis until the outer periphery of the eccentric ball portion has assumed a position corresponding to the required distance from the centre of rotation of the crank, even large tolerances of manufacture can be compensated for. The final assembly of the ball stud with the crank is an straightforward operation requiring only a pressing action. Double ball joints for connecting a pair of link mem-

bers to the crank, one for each wiper, can be produced in a generally similar manner by engaging with a press-fit a shaft portion of one of a pair of ball studs in a hole or sleeve of the other. Both ball studs may have an eccentric ball portion so that each of the two ball joints may be adjusted precisely independent of the other by rotation of the respective ball stud about its axis. In the preferred embodiment of the inventive method, the crank, the ball stud and the link member are provisionally assembled with a releasable fit of the ball stud shaft in the mounting hole of the crank. The resulting assembly is then installed on a measurement bench and operated through at least one complete wiping cycle. During such test wiping cycle, an error of the resulting wiping pattern

is detected. The detected error is then corrected by rotating the ball stud about the axis of the shaft portion by an amount determined to correct the detected error. In the final step, the shaft portion of the ball stud is permanently fixed in the mounting hole with a press-fit. These operations are preferably automated and controlled by computer. By detecting the error in a test cycle after the provisional assembly, all cumulated tolerances are taken into account.

[0007] In a first aspect, the inventive drive linkage for an automotive windshield wiper system, comprises a crank, a link member and at least one ball joint connecting the link member with the crank. The ball joint comprises a ball stud with a ball portion and a shaft portion that has an axis shifted with respect to an axis passing through the centre of the ball portion. The crank has a mounting hole, and the shaft portion of the ball stud is press-fitted into the mounting hole in a predetermined angular position about the axis of the shaft portion.

[0008] For a wiper system requiring a double ball joint, and in accordance with a second aspect of the invention, a drive linkage for an automotive windshield wiper system comprises a crank, a pair of link members and a pair of ball joints each connecting the crank with one of the pair of link members. A first one of the pair of ball joints comprises a first ball stud with a ball portion and a shaft portion axially opposite the ball portion. A second one of the pair of ball joints comprises a second ball stud with a ball portion and a sleeve portion, the sleeve portion having a cylindrical engagement hole axially opposite the ball portion. The crank has a mounting hole, and the shaft portion of the first ball stud is press fitted into the engagement hole in the sleeve portion of the second ball stud while the sleeve portion of the second ball stud is press-fitted into the mounting hole of the crank.

Further advantages and features of the invention will become apparent from the following description of several embodiments with reference to the drawings. In the drawings:

- 55 - Figure 1 schematically illustrates the geometry of a conventional drive linkage for an automotive windshield wiper system;

- Figure 2 is a partially sectioned view illustrating the adjustment and mounting steps during assembly of a ball stud with a crank;
- Figure 3 is a similar view illustrating adjustment and mounting steps for a double-type ball stud;
- Figure 4 is a sectional view of an assembled double ball joint;
- Figure 5 is a partially sectioned perspective view illustrating angular adjustment of an eccentric ball stud prior to the assembly step;
- Figure 6 is a similar view showing the ball stud in a condition assembled with a crank;
- Figure 7 is a view corresponding to that of Figure 5, but showing an alternative embodiment;
- Figure 8 is a view corresponding to Figure 6, but illustrating the alternative embodiment;
- Figure 9 is a sectional view of an assembled ball joint connecting a link member with a crank;
- Figure 10a shows components of a double ball stud prior to assembly;
- Figure 10b is a similar view, but showing one component in an axial section;
- Figure 11a shows the components of Figure 10 in an assembled condition;
- Figure 11b is similar to Figure 11a, but shows one of the components in an axial section;
- Figure 12 is an enlarged view of detail "A" in Figure 10a;
- Figure 13 shows an alternative embodiment of a double ball stud as viewed in different rotational positions; and
- Figure 14 is a view corresponding to that of Figure 13, but partially sectioned.

[0009] In a conventional drive linkage for an automotive wind shield wiper system, as seen in Figure 1, a crank 10 is driven in rotation by an output shaft 12 of an electric motor. The outer end of crank 10 is coupled to first ends of a pair of link members 14, 16, the second ends of which are connected to one of a pair of crank arms 18, 20. Each crank arm 18, 20 is connected to a pivot shaft on which a wiper arm is mounted.

[0010] Essential parameters that determine the wiping pattern on the wind shield are:

- a first radius R1 on which link member 14 is connected to crank 10;
- a second radius R2 on which link member 16 is connected to crank 10;
- a third radius R3 equivalent to the length of crank arm 18;
- a fourth radius R4 equivalent to the length of crank arm 20.

[0011] Usually, the third and fourth radii R3 and R4 should be equal.

[0012] In a conventional drive linkage, these parameters are adjusted after assembly to achieve a desired wiping pattern on the wind shield.

[0013] The connections between crank 10 and both link members 14, 16 are each materialized by a ball joint. Ball joints are also used to connect the link members 14, 16 to each of the crank arms 18, 20.

[0014] A ball joint consists of a ball stud and a socket engaged around the ball portion of the ball stud. In Figure 2, a ball stud 22 to be assembled with crank 10 is shown. Ball stud 22 consists of a ball portion 24 and a shaft portion 26. Shaft portion 26 is cylindrical with a knurled peripheral surface. Crank 10 has a cylindrical mounting hole 28 the diameter of which is slightly smaller than the outer diameter of shaft portion 26. Shaft portion 26 has an axis A1 that is shifted from an axis A2 passing through the center of ball portion 24. Thus, ball portion 24 is eccentric with respect to shaft portion 26. On its axial side opposite the shaft portion 26, the ball portion 24 has a flat, and a cylindrical engagement hole 30 extends inwardly from the flat into ball portion 24. Engagement hole 30 is coaxial with shaft portion 26.

[0015] Prior to assembly of ball stud 22 with crank 10, the shaft portion 26 is coaxially aligned with and presented in front of mounting hole 28, as seen in Figure 2. The distance of the peripheral surface of wall portion 24 is measured with respect to a fixed reference along an equatorial line of ball portion 24. A special clamping and pressing tool 32 is preferably used to hold and rotate ball stud 22 during this operation. Tool 32 has flexibly

spreadable clamping fingers on its end penetrating into engagement hole 30, and an axially movable shaft that has a tapered forward end penetrates between the clamping fingers urging them outwardly and into engagement with the surface of the engagement hole 30.

[0016] After the ball stud 22 has been adjusted to the correct angular position about axis A1, corresponding to a predetermined distance of its peripheral surface from the fixed reference, shaft portion 26 is engaged in mounting hole 28 with a press-fit. Additional riveting is usually not required, but may be applied to reinforce the connection between crank 10 and ball stud 22.

[0017] The engagement hole 30 serves multiple purposes. Besides facilitating the adjustment and assembly

steps, the engagement hole 30 may cooperate with a limiting member on the socket part of the ball joint, that penetrates into the hole and abuts against its internal walls to limit pivotal movement between the socket and the ball stud.

[0018] Another use of engagement hole 30 is apparent from Figure 3. As seen in that figure, a double ball stud can be formed easily by engaging the shaft portion 26a of a second ball stud 22a into engagement hole 30 of ball portion 24. Ball studs 22 and 22a are generally similar, although ball stud 22a may have a ball portion 24a with a smaller diameter. In particular, ball stud 22a also has a ball portion 24a that is eccentric with respect to its shaft portion 26a. Prior to assembly of the double ball stud with crank 10, ball stud 22a is adjusted by rotation about the axis of its shaft portion 26a until studs 22 and 22a are correctly aligned. Shaft portion 26a is then engaged in hole 30 with a press-fit. Thereafter, the adjustment and assembly steps are carried out in a manner similar to that described with respect to Figure 4, except that clamping and pressing tool 32 will engage into engagement hole 30a of ball stud 22a.

[0019] Figure 4 shows crank 10 as assembled with a double ball joint as obtained by the steps illustrated in Figure 3, the socket portions 34, 36 of the ball joints and the link members 14, 16 being also shown. As a result of the adjustment steps, link member 14 is connected to crank 10 on an effective radius R1, and link member 16 is connected to crank 10 on an effective radius R2 with respect to the axis of rotation of crank 10.

[0020] In the embodiment shown in Figures 5 and 6, a crank 40 is connected to a link member 42 by means of a ball joint that consists of a ball stud 44 and a socket 46. Ball stud 44 has a shaft portion 48 whereon three axially adjacent sections can be identified: a guiding section 48a, a mounting section 48b and an engagement section 48c, the mounting section 48b having a knurled peripheral surface and being located between the guiding section 48a and the engagement section 48c. In the condition shown in Figure 5, guiding section 48a is accommodated in a mounting hole of crank 40 with a loose fit so that rotation of ball stud 44 remains possible. In this embodiment, too, ball stud 44 has an eccentric ball portion so that rotation about the axis of shaft portion 48, as indicated in Figure 5 by an arrow, allows for an adjustment of the ball joint similar to the embodiment in Figure 2. Engagement section 48c is configured to match with a special tool (not shown) used to rotate ball stud 48 about its axis. When the correct rotational position of ball stud 48 is achieved, pressure is exerted axially on the end of engagement section 48c so that the mounting section 48b penetrates into the mounting hole of crank 40 and is engaged therein with a press-fit. A final assembly condition is illustrated in Figure 6.

[0021] The embodiment shown in Figures 7 and 8 is generally similar to that in Figures 5 and 6, but the mounting section 48b with the knurled peripheral sur-

face is located on the side of the ball portion of ball stud 48, and the guide section 48a is located between engagement section 48c and mounting section 48b. While rotary adjustment in this embodiment is the same as that

5 in the embodiment of Figures 5 and 6, the final assembly step requires axial pressure to be exerted from the side of the ball portion of ball stud 48. Figure 8 shows the ball joint in the assembled condition.

[0022] As seen in Figure 9, to allow axial pressure to be exerted on the ball portion 50 of ball stud 48, the ball portion 50 has a cylindrical extension 52 on its side axially opposite the shaft portion, terminating with a radially projecting flange 54. In the final assembly step, a pressure force F acts on flange 54, as seen in Figure 9.

15 Reaction forces G act on crank 10, as also illustrated in Figure 9.

[0023] After assembly of ball stud 48 with crank 10, a socket 56 is threaded over ball portion 50 to connect link member 58. An annular, bellows-type sealing sleeve 60

20 has a first axial end connected to socket 56 and a second axial end engaged about the cylindrical extension 52 and retained thereon by flange 54, acting as a retainer flange. Sealing sleeve 60 encloses a lubricant such as grease.

25 [0024] Figures 10 and 11 show an embodiment of a double ball stud for use in the invention. The double ball stud consists of a first, female ball stud member 70 and a second, male ball stud member 72. Female ball stud member 70 consists of a ball portion 70a and a sleeve

portion 70b. Sleeve portion 70b has a peripheral knurled engagement surface 70c for a press-fit in a mounting hole of the crank and an eccentric cylindrical engagement hole 70d. Male stud member 72 has a shaft portion 72a with a knurled peripheral surface for a press-fit in the engagement hole 70d of female stud member 70. Figure 10 shows the female stud member 70 and the male stud member 72 prior to assembly with each other. Figure 11 shows both stud members in the assembled condition where the shaft portion 72a of male stud mem-

40 ber 72 is engaged in hole 70d of female stud member 70 with a press-fit. As is seen, male stud member 72 has a ball portion that is coaxial with its shaft portion, but the axis of stud member 72 is shifted with respect to an axis passing through the center of the ball portion 70a of stud member 70.

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[0025] Assembly of the double ball stud with a crank is made in a manner similar to that in the embodiment of Figure 9. Prior to the final pressing step, the double ball stud is rotated about the axis of the female stud member 70 to achieve the required amount of eccentricity of stud member 72.

[0026] Such adjustment by rotation of the double ball stud is facilitated by a feature referred to as "detail A" in Figure 10, which is separately shown in Figure 12 on an enlarged scale. According to this feature, the sleeve portion 70b of female stud member 70 is provided with a number of axially extending ribs 80 which slightly project radially. These ribs 80 provide a loose fit in the mounting

hole of the crank. After the double ball stud has been rotated to the correct position in the mounting hole of the crank, it is maintained in that position during the final pressing step by engagement of the ribs 80 into the material defining the mounting hole. Similar ribs can also be used in the embodiments shown in Figures 5 to 8, and also in the further embodiment that will now be described with reference to Figures 13 and 14.

[0027] The embodiment in Figures 13 and 14 is generally similar to that in Figures 10 and 11, with two exceptions. First, the female stud member 70 has a ball portion 70a that is eccentric with respect to the knurled engagement section 70c. Second, as seen in the sectional view of Figure 14, the female stud member 70 is composed of a stud portion 70e integrally formed with head portion 70a, and a sleeve portion 70f fitted around shaft portion 70e. The sleeve portion 70f is firmly connected to shaft portion 70e such as by soldering or crimping. The knurled shaft portion of stud member 72 is engaged in sleeve member 70f with a press-fit.

Claims

1. A method of pre-assembling a drive linkage for an automotive windshield wiper system, the linkage comprising a crank, a link member and at least one ball joint connecting the link member with the crank, comprising the steps of
 - a) providing a ball stud with a ball portion and a shaft portion that has an axis shifted with respect to an axis passing through the centre of the ball portion;
 - b) providing a cylindrical mounting hole in said crank;
 - c) presenting an end of the shaft portion coaxially in front of the mounting hole;
 - d) rotating the ball stud about the axis of the shaft portion to a predetermined position with respect to said crank;
 - e) and press-fitting the shaft portion of the ball stud in the mounting hole while the ball stud is maintained in the predetermined position about the axis of the mounting hole.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the predetermined position of the ball stud is determined by measuring the distance between the periphery of the ball portion and a fixed reference.
3. The method of claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the ball portion is provided with a cylindrical engagement hole that extends coaxially with the shaft portion
 - 5 from an axial end opposite the shaft portion, and a rotatable press tool is engaged into the engagement hole to rotate the stud member to the predetermined position and then subject the ball stud to axial pressure in the press-fitting step.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein the press tool has a head portion with radially flexible clamping fingers and a spreading member to urge the clamping fingers radially outwardly into clamping engagement with internal wall portions of the engagement hole.
- 10 5. The method of claim 3 or claim 4, wherein a pair of similar ball studs are assembled by engaging with a press-fit the shaft portion of one ball stud into the engagement hole of the other ball stud, and the shaft portion of the other ball stud is engaged with a press-fit into the mounting hole of the crank.
- 15 6. The method of claim 5, wherein each of the pair of ball studs is rotated to and mounted in a respective predetermined position relative to the axis of the mounting hole.
- 20 7. The method of any of the preceding claims, wherein the shaft portion of the ball stud is provided with a knurled peripheral surface.
- 25 8. The method of claim 1, wherein the shaft portion of the ball stud is provided with a guide section and with an interference section axially adjacent to the guide section, the guide section is rotatably received in the mounting hole of the crank for rotation to the predetermined position, and the ball stud is then subjected to axial pressure to introduce the interference section with a press-fit into the mounting hole.
- 30 9. The method of claim 8, wherein the guide section is provided with axially extending engagement ribs dimensioned to prefix the shaft portion in the mounting hole while permitting rotation of the ball stud.
- 35 10. The method of claim 8 or claim 9, wherein the guide section is provided between the interference section and the ball part and axial pressure is exerted on the shaft part of the ball stud.
- 40 11. The method of claim 8 or claim 9, wherein the interference section is provided between the guide section and the ball part and axial pressure is exerted on the ball part of the ball stud.
- 45 12. The method of claim 12, wherein the ball portion of the ball stud is provided with an engagement extension opposite the shaft portion.
- 50 13. The method of claim 12, wherein the engagement

extension is provided with a retainer flange and a bellows-type sealing sleeve is fitted over at least part of the ball portion and is axially retained by the retainer flange.

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14. The method of any of claims 1 to 13, wherein the crank, the ball stud and the link member are assembled with a releasable fit of the ball stud shaft in the mounting hole of the crank, the resulting assembly is installed on a measurement bench and operated through at least one complete wiping cycle, an error of the resulting wiping pattern is detected, the detected error is corrected by rotating the ball stud about the axis of the shaft portion by an amount determined to correct the detected error, and the shaft portion of the ball stud is permanently fixed in the mounting hole with a press-fit.

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15. A drive linkage for an automotive windshield wiper system, comprising a crank, a link member and at least one ball joint connecting the link member with the crank, and **characterised in that**

- the ball joint comprises a ball stud with a ball portion and a shaft portion that has an axis shifted with respect to an axis passing through the centre of the ball portion;
- the crank has a mounting hole; and
- the shaft portion of the ball stud is press-fitted into the mounting hole in a predetermined angular position about the axis of the shaft portion.

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16. The drive linkage of claim 15, wherein the ball portion of the ball stud has a cylindrical engagement hole that extends inwardly co-axially with the shaft portion from an axial end opposite the shaft portion.

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17. The drive linkage of claim 16, wherein the ball portion of the ball stud has a flat on its axial end opposite the shaft portion and the engagement hole extends from the flat.

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18. The drive linkage of claim 16 or claim 17, comprising a further ball joint for connection of the crank to a further link member, the further ball joint having a further ball stud with a ball portion and a shaft portion, said shaft portion having an axis shifted with respect to an axis passing through the centre of said ball portion, and said shaft portion of said further ball stud being press-fitted into the cylindrical engagement hole.

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19. A drive linkage for an automotive windshield wiper system, comprising a crank, a pair of link members and a pair of ball joints each connecting the crank with one of the pair of link members, and **characterised in that**

- a first one of the pair of ball joints comprises a first ball stud with a ball portion and a shaft portion axially opposite the ball portion;
- a second one of the pair of ball joints comprises a second ball stud with a ball portion and a sleeve portion, the sleeve portion having a cylindrical engagement hole axially opposite the ball portion;
- the crank has a mounting hole;
- the shaft portion of the first ball stud is press-fitted into the engagement hole in the sleeve portion of the second ball stud; and
- the sleeve portion of the second ball stud is press-fitted into the mounting hole of the crank.

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20. The drive linkage of claim 19, wherein the engagement hole in the sleeve portion of the second ball stud has an axis shifted with respect to an axis passing through the centre of the ball portion.

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21. The drive linkage of claim 19, wherein the sleeve portion of the second ball stud has a peripheral engagement surface with an axis shifted with respect to an axis passing through the centre of the ball portion.

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22. The drive linkage of any of claims 19 to 21, wherein the ball portion and the shaft portion of the first ball stud are co-axial.

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23. The drive linkage of any of claims 15 to 22, wherein the shaft portion of the ball stud has a knurled peripheral surface.

24. The drive linkage of any of claims 19 to 23, wherein the sleeve portion of the second ball stud has a knurled peripheral engagement surface.

25. The drive linkage of any of claims 14 to 19, wherein the shaft portion of the ball stud has a plurality of axially extending engagement ribs slightly projecting on the peripheral surface of the shaft portion.

26. The drive linkage of claim 25, wherein a knurled peripheral engagement surface extends on a first axial section and the engagement ribs extend on a second axial section of the shaft portion adjacent the first section.

27. The drive linkage of any of claims 19 to 23, wherein the sleeve portion of the ball stud has a plurality of axially extending engagement ribs slightly projecting on the peripheral surface of the sleeve portion.

28. The drive linkage of claim 27, wherein a knurled peripheral engagement surface extends on a first axial section and the engagement ribs extend on a second axial section of the sleeve portion adjacent the

first section.

29. The drive linkage of any of claims 15 to 28, wherein
the ball portion of the ball stud has an axial engage-
ment extension provided with a radially projecting
retainer flange, and a bellows-type sealing sleeve
is fitted over at least part of the ball portion and is
axially retained by the retainer flange. 5

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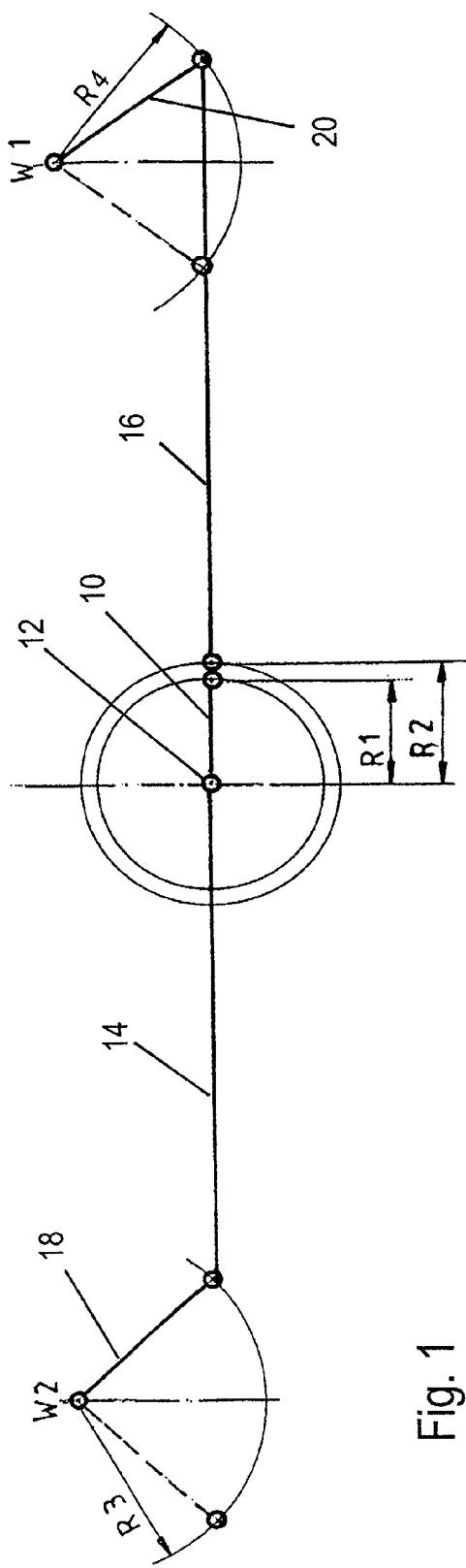


Fig. 1

Fig. 2

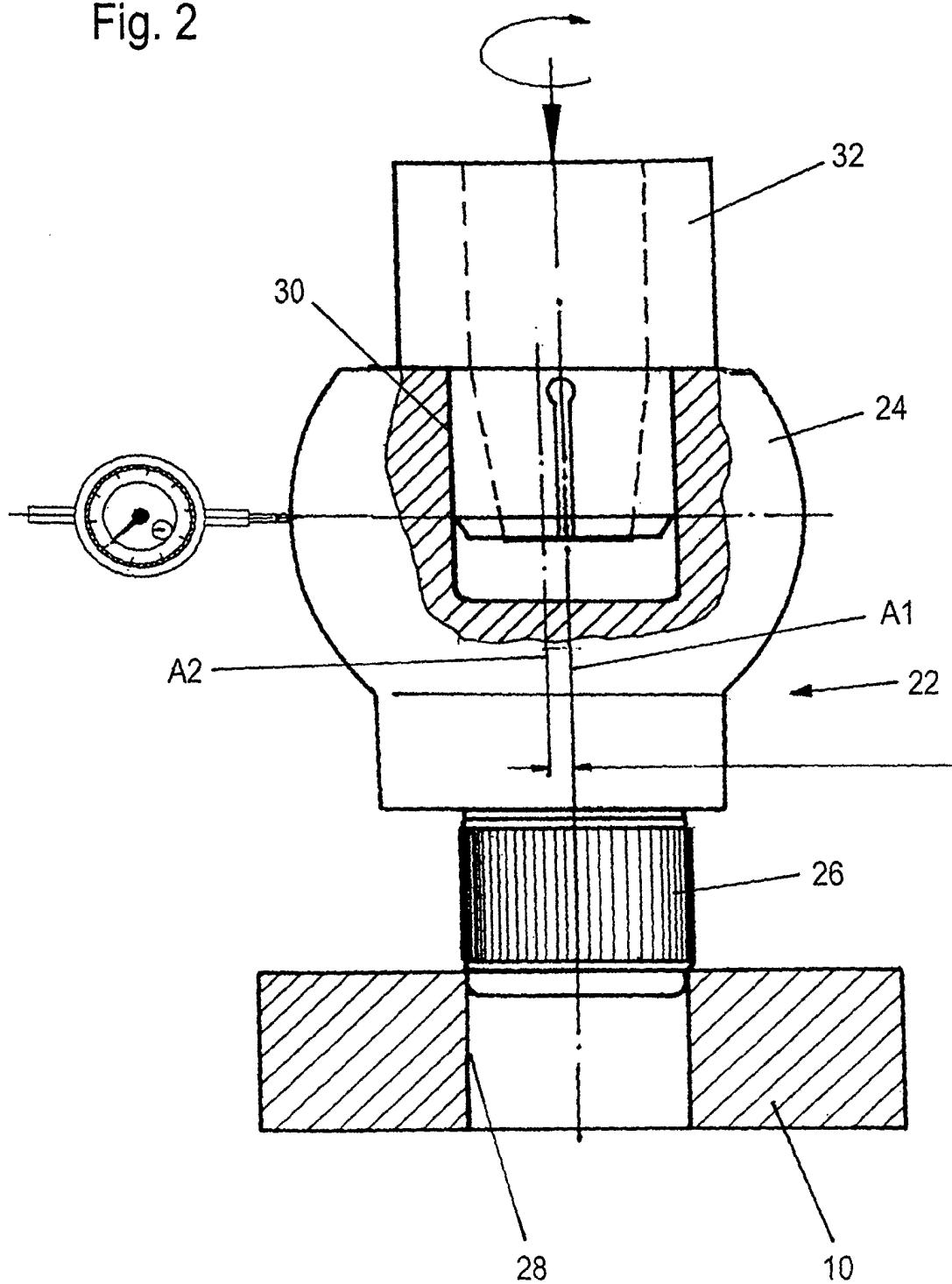


Fig. 3

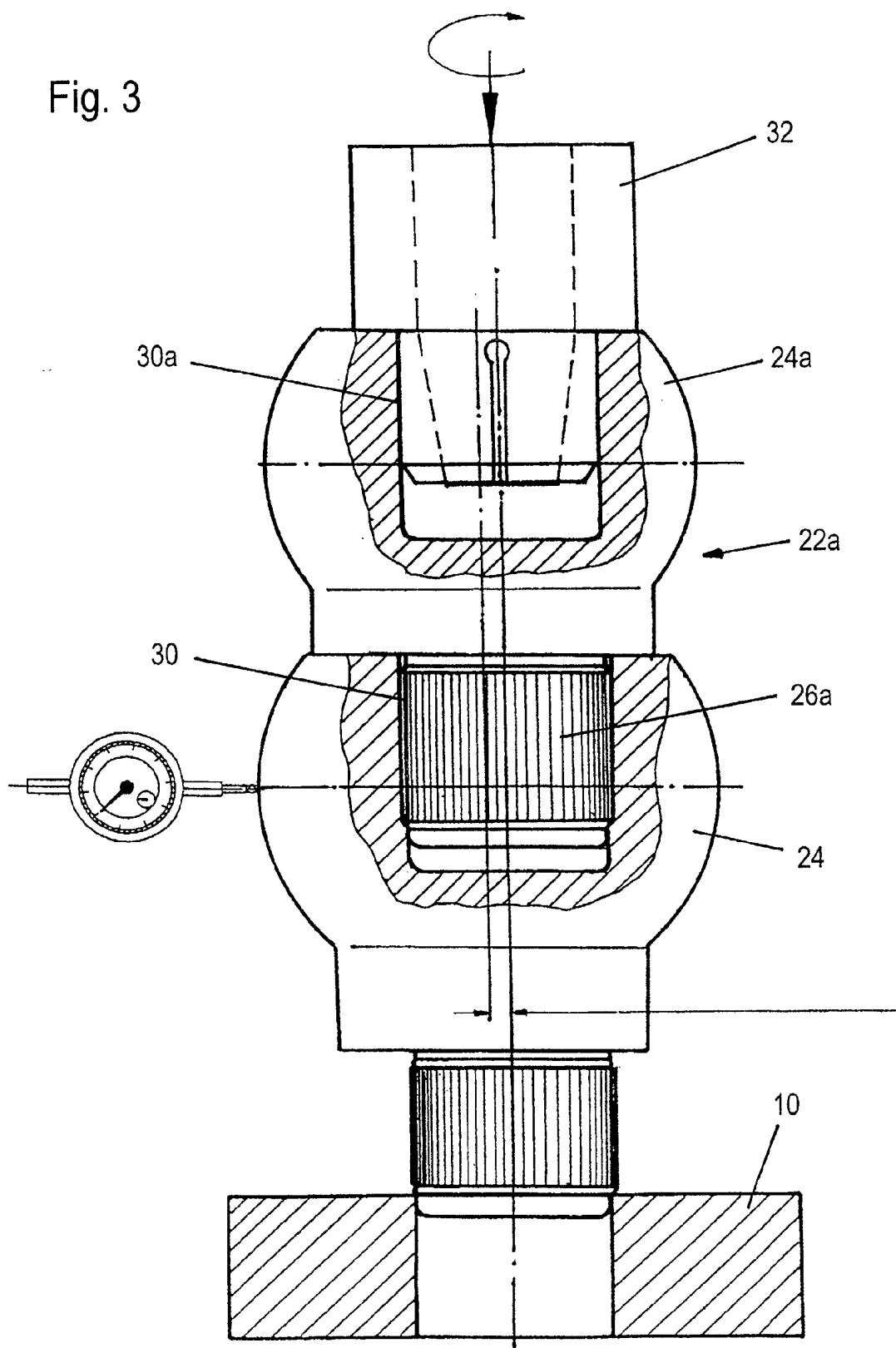
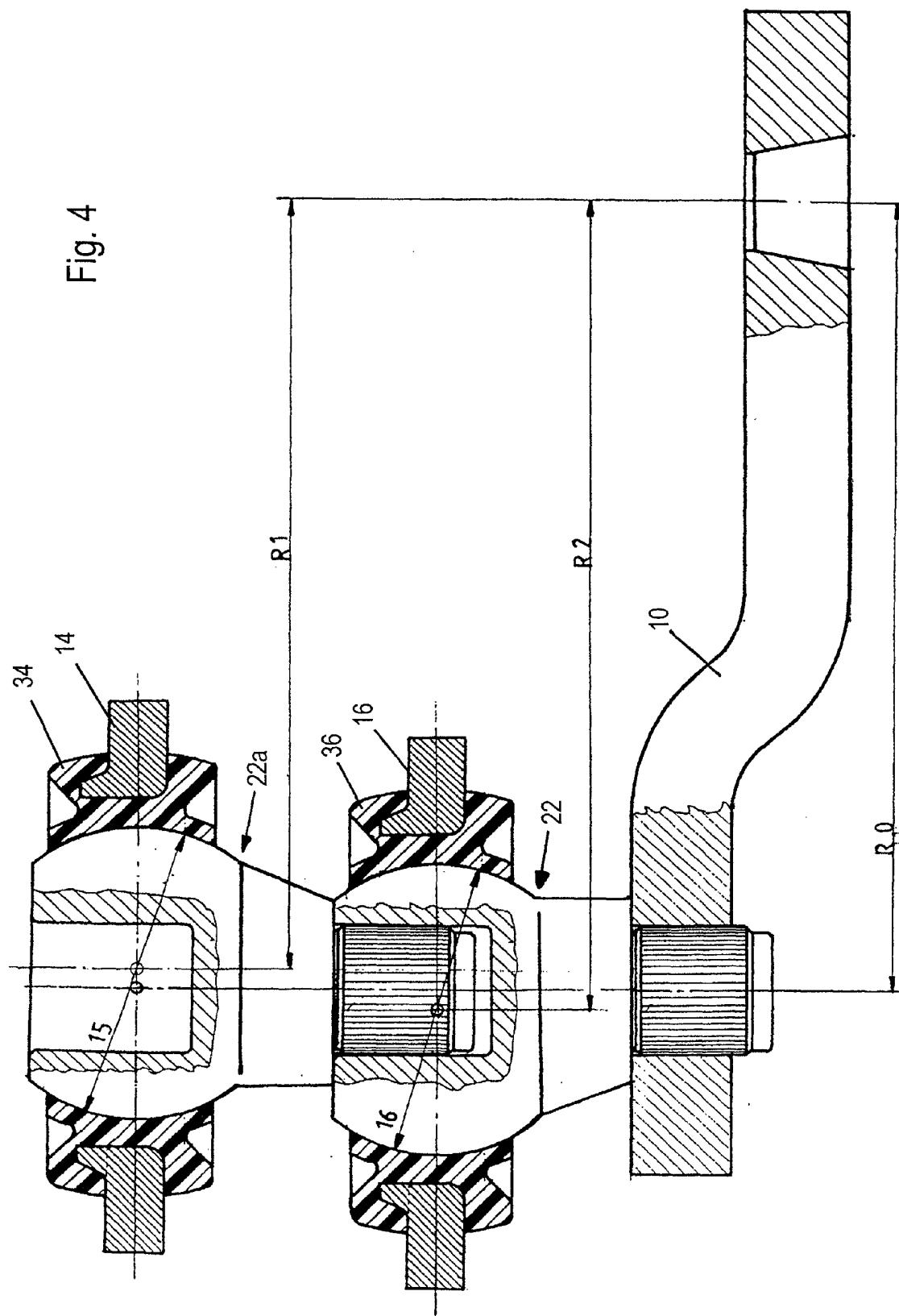


Fig. 4



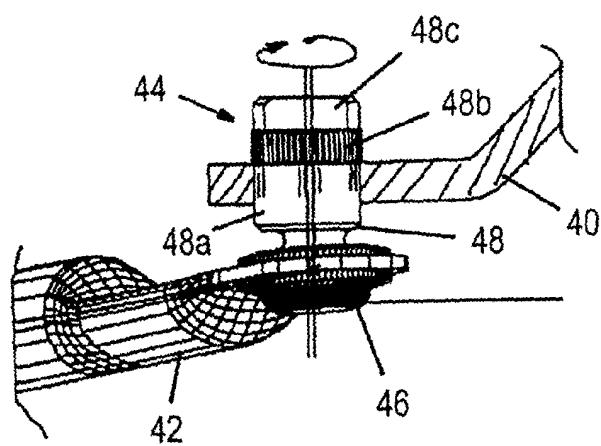


Fig. 5

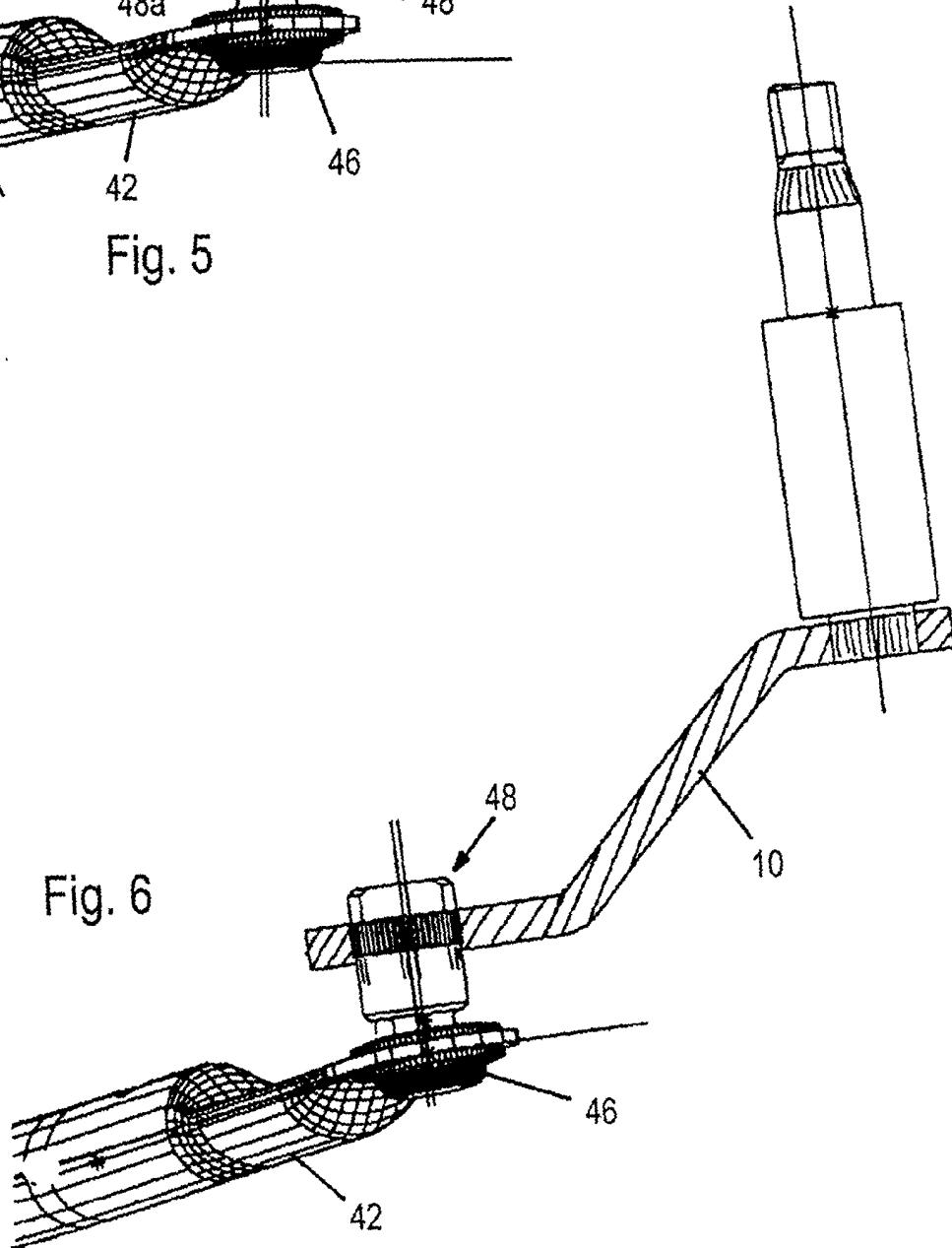


Fig. 6

Fig. 7

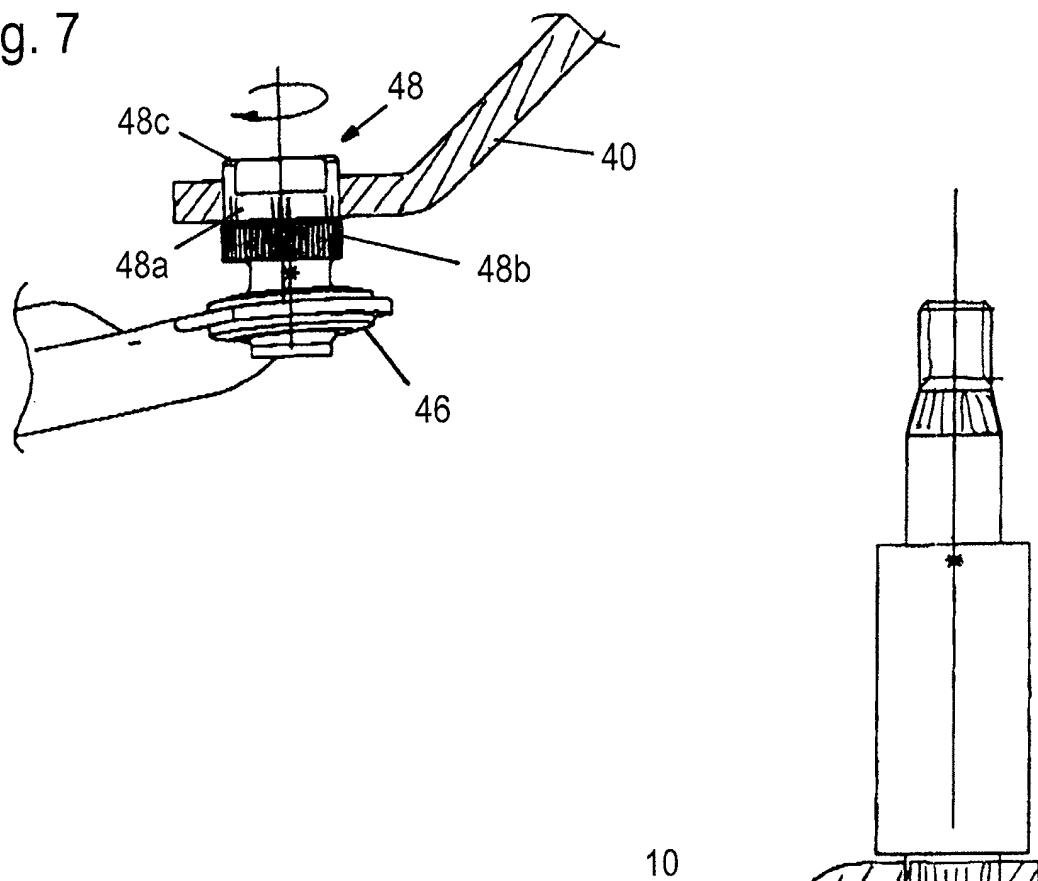


Fig. 8

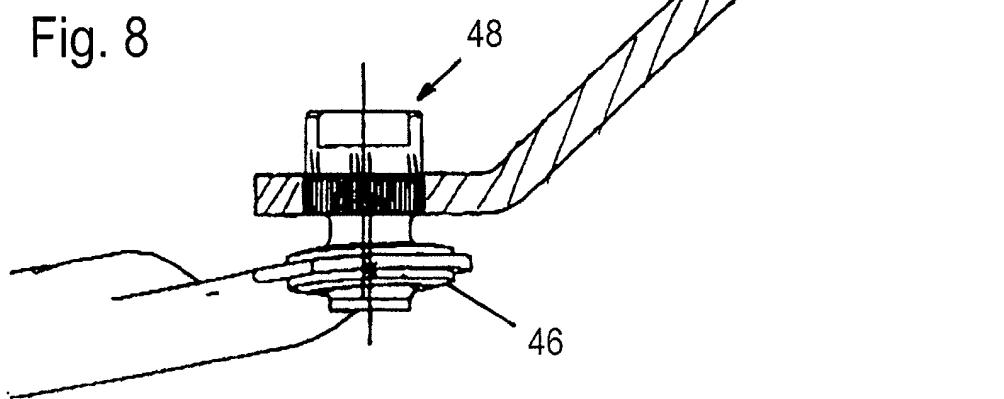


Fig. 9

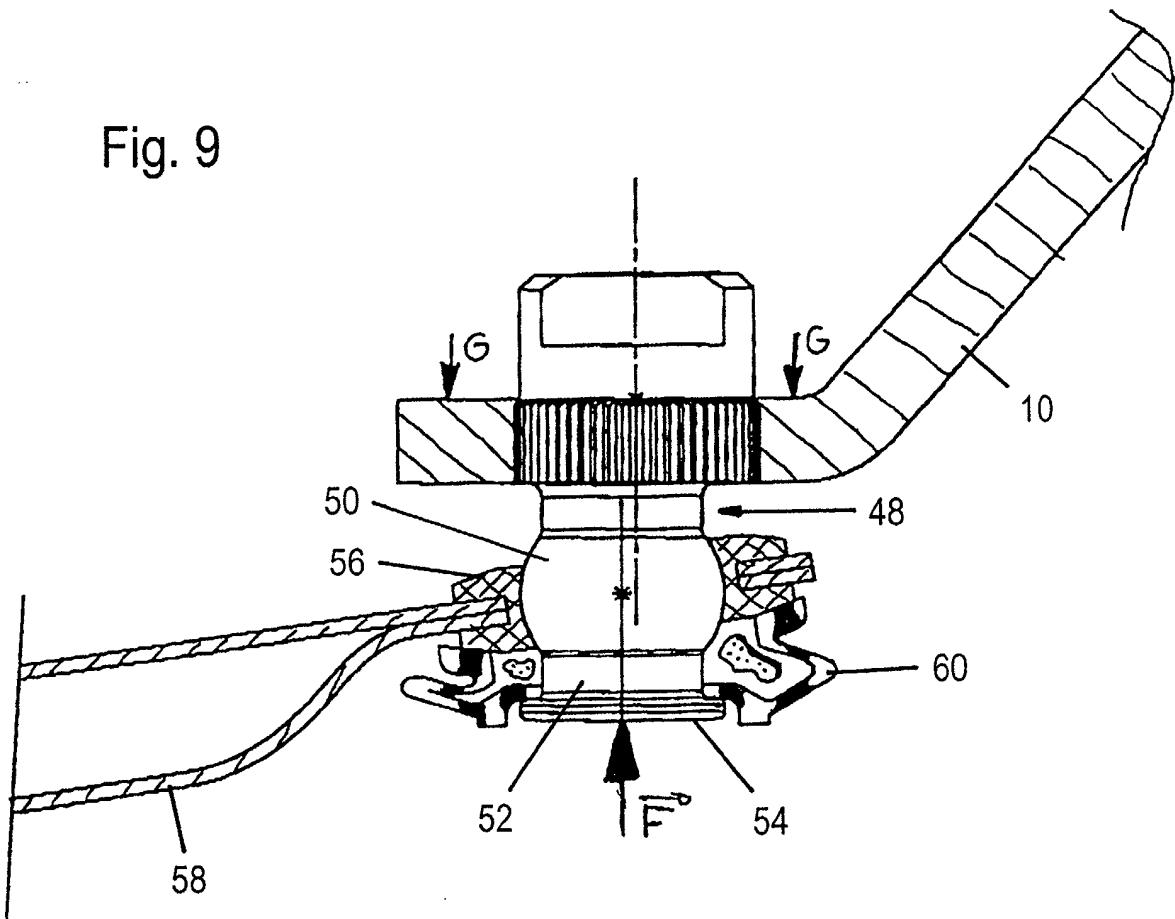


Fig. 10

Fig. 11

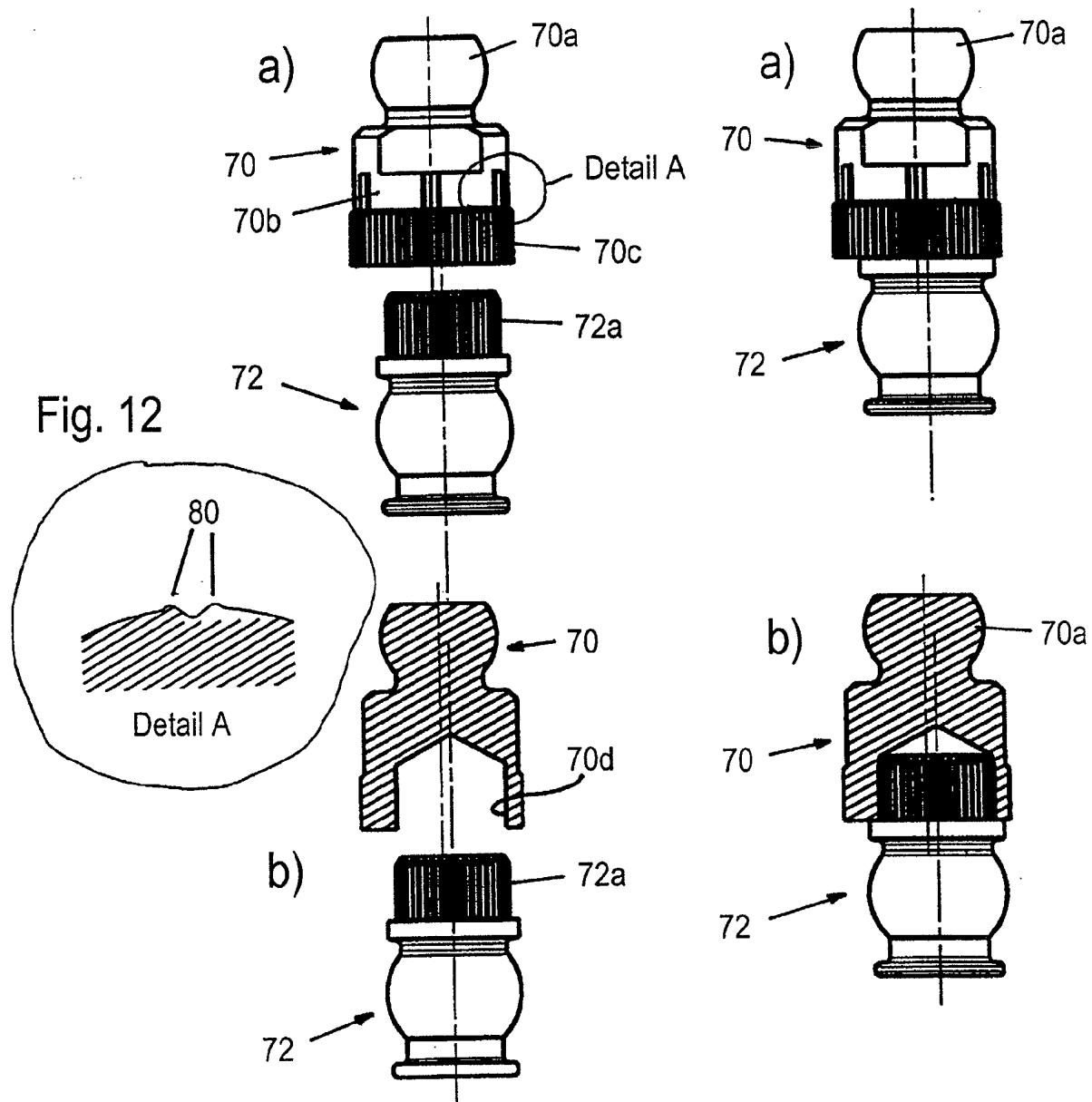


Fig. 13

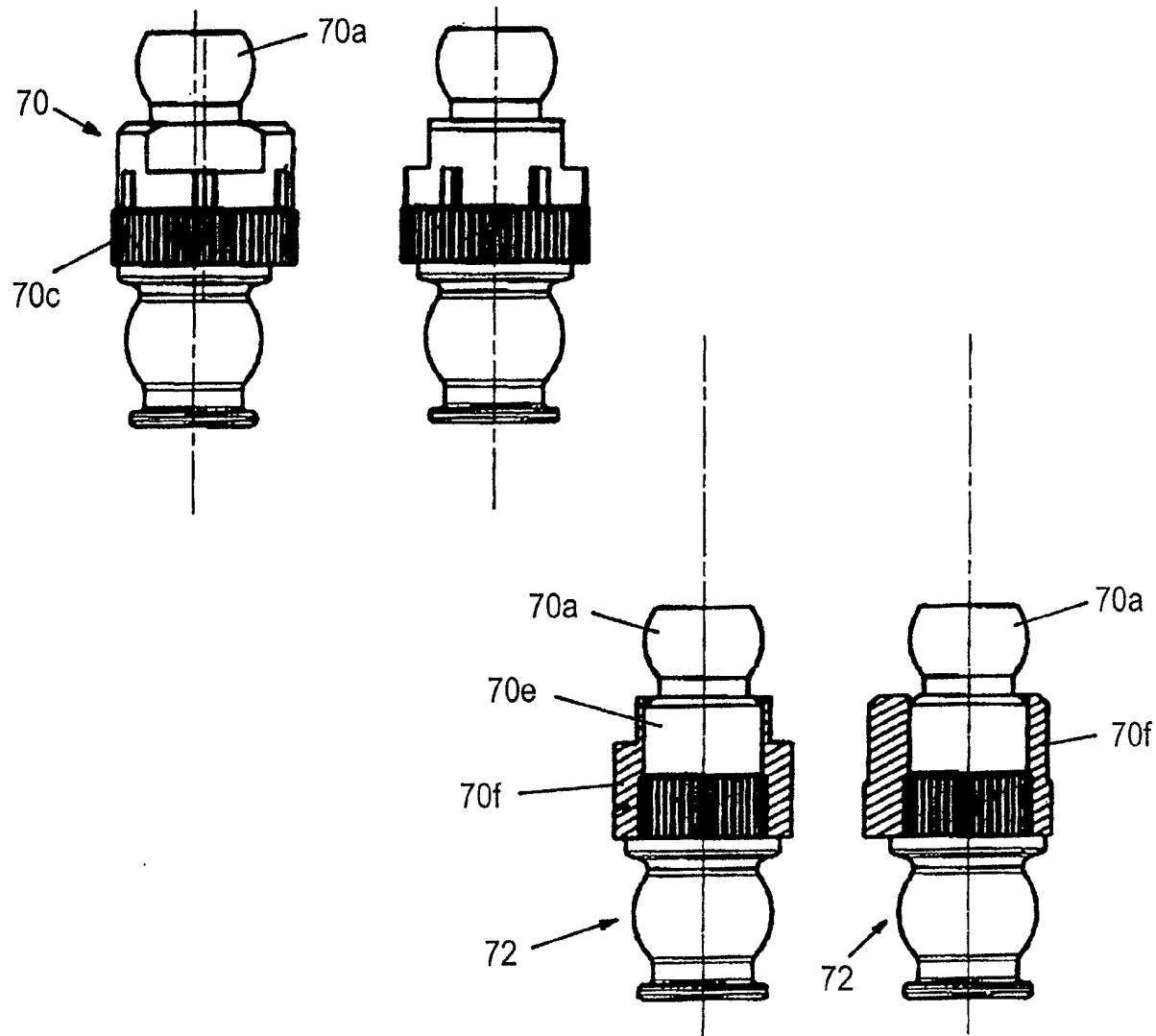


Fig. 14



European Patent
Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 02 29 3042

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7)
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	
X	DE 197 46 376 A (ITT MFG ENTERPRISES INC) 22 April 1999 (1999-04-22)	1-4,7, 14,15, 23,25,26	B60S1/24 F16C23/10 F16C11/06
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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search	Date of completion of the search	Examiner	
THE HAGUE	7 July 2003	Blandin, B	
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS			
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Application Number
EP 02 29 3042

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT									
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7)						
A	US 5 473 955 A (STINSON ANDREW E) 12 December 1995 (1995-12-12) * the whole document *	19,22 -----							
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7)						
<p>The present search report has been drawn up for all claims</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Place of search</td> <td>Date of completion of the search</td> <td>Examiner</td> </tr> <tr> <td>THE HAGUE</td> <td>7 July 2003</td> <td>Blandin, B</td> </tr> </table> <p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document</p> <p>T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p>				Place of search	Date of completion of the search	Examiner	THE HAGUE	7 July 2003	Blandin, B
Place of search	Date of completion of the search	Examiner							
THE HAGUE	7 July 2003	Blandin, B							



European Patent
Office

Application Number

CLAIMS INCURRING FEES

The present European patent application comprised at the time of filing more than ten claims.

Only part of the claims have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims and for those claims for which claims fees have been paid, namely claim(s):

No claims fees have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims.

LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

see sheet B

All further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for all claims.

As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, the Search Division did not invite payment of any additional fee.

Only part of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the inventions in respect of which search fees have been paid, namely claims:

None of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the invention first mentioned in the claims, namely claims:



European Patent
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LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION
SHEET B

Application Number
EP 02 29 3042

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

1. Claims: 1-18,23,25,26,29

Method of pre-assembling a windshield wiper drive linkage and drive linkage where the shaft portion of the ball stud has an axis shifted with respect to an axis passing through the center of the ball portion.

2. Claims: 19-22,24,27,28

Drive linkage comprising a pair of ball studs, one is press-fitted in a crank and the second one in a sleeve of the first ball stud.

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 02 29 3042

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report.
 The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
 The European Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.

07-07-2003

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